

ABSTRACT

A data distribution system (**10**) including an information card (**12**) and a reader (**14**). The information card (**12**) includes visible indicia (**20**) on its front and stripe zones (**34**) and a ring zone (**36**) on its back. The zones (**34, 36**) are suitable for magnetically recording data, and optional characteristics for such data. The reader (**14**) may be a linear reader (**14a**), a rotary reader (**14b**), or a card-stationary reader (**14c, 14d**) and may optionally act automatically in response to reading one or more of the optional data characteristics. If the reader (**14**) is a rotary reader (**14b**) the information card (**12**) may particularly be loaded into a cartridge (**16**) which is loaded into the rotary reader (**14b**).